

**Exploring the Effect of Pre-Collegiate Inclusive Practices and Stress on College Attendee
Expectations**

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Abstract

Research has indicated that prescreening and tutoring of preK-12 students has increased academic outcomes, while positive interventions have been shown to increase student self-monitoring and social skills. However, research focused on minority demographics contradicts these findings. Research is lacking longitudinally in education from primary school to college. An online survey was used to gauge current college student perceptions of these traits to see whether the frameworks of primary and secondary education along with cognitive hardiness and social support could predict expectations of student experiences at college. Results indicated a statistically significant but weak prediction model in the total sample but not in analysis of African American participants.

Keywords: Response to Intervention, Positive Behavior Support, Cognitive Hardiness, Social Support Networks, college expectations

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Research on the long term effectiveness of primary and secondary school frameworks to promote academic and social/emotive learning is instead replaced with a research basis that focuses solely on individuals still within the preK-12 system and does not follow the long term effects in a linear manner. Instead, where one body of research concludes another begins: that of academic and social/emotive abilities in adulthood without the context of an individual's earlier experiences. When facets such as social or academic support are addressed, it is covered in breadth but not depth, which continues to cause confounds for the individuals on either side of the theoretically constructed line dividing the educational environment into preK-12 and what comes afterward. This is further obfuscated by the individual schools and systems implementations of Response to Intervention and Positive Behavioral Support and their collegiate equivalents, as well as a significant portion of research excluding analyses into variations in diverse populations within these topics. As a result, researchers in Intersectional Studies attempt to bridge this gap, but most often address only one or two facets outside of the typical sample base, and often within their own section of Intersectional Research. While the field arose because of studies with the majority demographic as the area of analysis, the same error is ultimately repeated. With one body of researchers conducting studies based around the Stereotypical White Male (SWM), the reaction within Intersectional Research was to develop frameworks such as critical race theory and critical feminism theory. The issue is that in addressing non-SWM populations, they exclude those populations under the pretense that most of the research already covers that area, so an accurate depiction within research literature is not formed.

To redress this issue, research must be designed and conducted in such a manner that incorporates the entire range of individuals instead of a primary focus and reactionary specialized foci. The error in these approaches is that they inhibit applied research to redress the issues they study and keep them perpetually at a theoretical exploration stage. While there are some exceptions to this rule, such as Vanderbilt University of the Chautauqua Institution they are in the minority. This exclusion of the individual element in research is understandable from a statistical standpoint to an extent, but the issue arises in terms of ethical and moral obligations that a study on trauma survivors should not be as depersonalized as a study on operational efficiency in human resources management, or in a field outside of the social sciences. For this reason, understanding a longitudinal and inclusive perspective of the academic and social/emotive development of all individuals is necessary to turn theory into practice. Specialized fields are a fundamental necessity in research that should be supported by research that communicates between and can apply the findings into solutions that improve quality of life for as many individuals as possible.

Within the context of education, the line that has been drawn between PreK-12 and Higher Education needs to be erased, and studies should turn from replicating previous research that indicated limitations within sample demographics and the effort should instead be put toward designing projects that are inclusive. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research that addresses the academic and social/emotive scaffolds that develop cognitive hardiness and social support and connects that to the research that draws upon those areas and how they effect adults in post-secondary education while accounting for the strengths, flaws, and existing confounds with existing frameworks within education.

Fuchs and Fuchs (2017, pp. 255-256) define Response to Intervention (RTI) as a system of academic support by which students are screened using standardized testing at the beginning of the academic year, with students that do not meet benchmarks referred for either small group or large group tutoring, and rescreening at intervals to determine whether the child's academic support in terms of tutoring should be changed. They further indicate that the underlying issue with RTI is that as a framework fidelity and efficacy varies greatly between schools, with some schools not referring students that need academic support out of fear of being perceived as biased while others refer students that exceed benchmarks on the standardized screening tests to tutoring regardless and thereby spread the availability of academic support for students with legitimate need too thin (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2017, p. 261). RTI has been shown to improve academic performance and decrease racial disparity (Burns, et al., 2005 as cited in Maki, 2018) while also being shown to have either a negative effect or no effect (Balu, et al., 2015 as cited in Maki, 2018). This parallels some of the issues acknowledged with RTI as a framework (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2017, p. 261) and is acknowledged to be a confound that requires further investigation as some programs are implementing the framework of RTI as a screening measure for significant learning delay (SLD) (Maki, 2018) but which adds another confound to the matter,

McDaniel, et al. (2020) define Positive Behavioral Support (PBS), also known as Positive Behavior Intervention Support, and School Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention Support, as proactive engagement with students at the facility level to promote self-monitoring and appropriate context specific behaviors, with small group interventions and/or one on one interventions as determined by student behavior and the standards of the school. While properly implemented PBS frameworks have been shown to improve student social/emotive development in as referred to as cognitive hardiness and social support networks within psychology,

disparities based on demographics of schools and their students are still problematic. Non-Caucasian students average receiving disciplinary measures approximately three times as often as Caucasian students (McIntosh, et al., 2014 as cited in McDaniel, et al., 2020, p. 2).

Ritzer and Sleigh (2019) indicate that four of the primary factors for student expectations for college (COL) are parental attitudes and their academic experiences prior to entering college, stress, and the attitude of their peers. When students are exposed to high stress, peers that do not consider attending college a priority or are dismissive of attending college, have parents that are not supportive of entrance to college, or have culminated adverse experiences in their primary and secondary education they are less likely to attend college and more likely to perceive it as an obligation compared to those that had positive influences in these areas. Garriott and Nisle (2018) determined that first generation college students experienced less stress and more positive outcomes with institutional supports than without, while second generation or latter college students did not have a significant difference in their respective levels of stress or expectations. This suggests that individuals that receive additional support prior to entering college as a first generation student are more effected by the institutional scaffolds in place than those who are in the position of having lesser hardships or difficulties as reflected by a continuation of collegiate attendance within their family.

Annamma, et al. (2016) concluded based on a study implementing critical feminism theory and critical race theory that ethnic minorities of both traditional gender identifications experienced disparities in academic and social/emotive interventions throughout primary and secondary school. While Caucasians were disciplined most often for objective infractions, a disproportionate number of non-Caucasians were disciplined based upon subjective infractions. Annamma, et. al. (2016) indicate that differences in cultures in non-Caucasians were attributed to

intentional maladaptive behaviors and disrespect and therefore punished, which suggests either educator ignorance of cultural differences or the possibility of implicit bias. Due to the research basis in sum, it was hypothesized that RTI, PBS, SOC, and COG would produce a statistically significant prediction of COL. Further, it was also hypothesized that there would be a significant difference between a total sample model and a model that was based on a racial/ethnic sample minority.

Methods

Participants

Participants were student volunteers attending the University of Tennessee at Martin during the Fall 2020 semester from the College of Education, Health, and Behavioral Sciences. There were 109 female participants and 32 male participants, with 107 Caucasian participants and 25 African American participants out of the 143 students that completed the survey, with 60 participants excluded from the total ($n = 203$) due to not completing the survey.

Materials

Stress Profile Inventory (SPI; Nowak, 1999) – The research instrument incorporated the Cognitive Hardiness and Social Support Network subscales from this primary instrument. Cognitive Hardiness comprised 29 Likert ascending agreement scale questions rated 0-5 with questions numbered 7-9, 12, 15, 17, and 20-27 being reverse coded and 0 indicating Not Applicable. Social Support Networks comprised 15 Likert Ascending agreement scale questions with no inverse coding and values consistent with the previously indicated subscale. The researcher modified the language and style used in the subscales only to the extent necessary to avoid priming COVID-19 anxiety and instrument consistency.

College Student Expectation Questionnaire (CSXQ; University of Indiana Bloomington, 2013). The research instrument incorporated the subscales for Faculty Interaction, Proactivity, Involvement, and Goals while excluding subscales referencing social activity as a potential COVID-19 distress inducement. Subscales were originally Likert ascending scales from 1-4 and were modified to 0-5 for instrument consistency.

The instrument used in this research incorporated two independently designed subscales, one for RTI and one for PBS, each comprising four Likert ascending scales with design consistent to the adaptations indicated above. The instrument in total comprised informed consent, demographic questions, and the subscales indicated above in logical sequencing for a prediction model (Appendix C). The instrument was uploaded to the web survey hosting company QuestionPro for online distribution within the scope of the potential participants.

Design and Procedure

Students were recruited from the College of Education, Health, and Behavioral Sciences on a voluntary basis. The Dean of CEHBS provided information to instructors within the departments of the college via listserv and those faculty that chose to participate distributed the information to their students. Students that chose to participate first created an account for the University of Tennessee at Martin's **SONA** platform, a web-based research pool that organizes and documents research inclusive of web-based surveys. Next, they read and agreed to the informed consent (Appendix B) and completed the survey as indicated by the instructions contained in the instrument. After which they were assigned participation or extra credit at the discretion of participating faculty through collaboration with the Faculty Advisor for the research project and the Laboratory Assistant for the Department of Psychology. Data from the survey was analyzed using **IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions** (IBM SPSS; International

Machines Business Corporation, 2020) via laptop device with data downloaded from the web survey hosting company QuestionPro. Data analysis consisted of transformation and recoding for internal consistency, and correlations and regression models to test whether RTI, PBS, COG, and SOC could predict COL in both total sample and minority populations, hypothesizing that the model would be representative for a total sample but not for a racial/ethnic minority.

Results

In order to examine the primary hypothesis of prediction and the secondary hypothesis of disparity in modeling for non-Caucasians, a series of multiple regressions were run on the total sample ($n = 143$) and individuals identifying as African American ($n = 29$) which comprised approximately 17.6% of the sample. Other racial/ethnic identities were not analyzed due to lack of a significant representation in terms of participants from a statistical standpoint (Hispanic: $n = 2$, Multiracial: $n = 3$, and Other: $n = 2$). The model for the total sample (Appendix A) indicated a weak statistical significance, while the regression run exclusively on African Americans (Appendix B) did not indicated significance in variables for the Pearson Correlation excluding cognitive hardiness, and a or the linear regression model.

To determine whether attending college student expectations and goals could be predicted by their prior exposure to academic and social/emotive frameworks in primary and secondary education and their current cognitive hardiness and social support networks, a multiple linear regression was performed. An initial Pearson correlation was performed on the variables RTI, PBS, SOC, and COG and a significant correlation was found between each variable. RTI and PBS ($r = .462, p < .05$, SOC ($r = .204, p < .05$), and COG ($r = .218, p < .05$); SOC and both PBS ($r = .332, p < .05$) and COG ($r = .248, p < .05$); and COG with PBS ($r = .245, p < .05$). Results of the regression indicated that the model was significant. $F(4,138) =$

7.829, $p < .05$), explaining approximately 16% of the variance. The regression equation to predict COL = .09RTI + .076PBS + .354SOC - .001 COG + 37.869.

To determine whether attending college student expectations and goals could be predicted by their prior exposure to academic and social/emotive frameworks in primary and secondary education and their current cognitive hardiness and social support networks, a multiple linear regression was performed on African American students. An initial Pearson correlation was performed on the variables RTI, PBS, SOC, and COG and a significant correlation was found between each variable excluding COG. RTI and both PBS ($r = .582, p < .05$) and SOC ($r = .364, p < .05$); SOC and PBS ($r = .142, p < .05$). By comparison, COG and RTI ($r = -.111, p > .05$), PBS ($r = .017, p > .05$) and SOC ($r = -.189, p > .05$). Results of the regression indicated that the model was not significant. $F(4, 24) = .390, p > .05$.

Discussion

Summarizing Findings

The analyses indicated that a statistically significant model could be predicted based upon the hypothesized model for a total sample population. Additionally, the secondary hypothesis was supported by the lack of a statistically significant model for African American participants. In the total sample model, cognitive hardiness barely exceeded .05 in correlation with college expectations and goals. In the secondary analysis cognitive hardiness did not have a significant correlation with the other predictor variables and the output of the prediction model indicated negative coefficients related to cognitive hardiness. Additional analyses were performed including the two published with bootstrapping, and male Caucasian and female Caucasian with and without bootstrapping. These analyses were excluded from this study on the basis that no

significant differences existed between models in the additional analyses compared to those included.

General Summary

Previous studies have found that properly implemented RTI and PBS have positive outcomes on academic and social/emotive learning when properly implemented ((Fuchs & Fuchs, 2017, p. 261; McDaniel, et al., 2020). Within Psychology these correspond to cognitive hardiness and social support networks. Additional research has indicated that cognitive hardiness and social support networks have a positive relationship with an individual's goals and expectations (Ritzer & Sleigh, 2019; Garriott & Nisle, 2018). By comparison, RTI and PBS have been indicated to have a negative affect when not properly implemented with the most common demographic consisting of non-Caucasian individuals (Annamma, et. al., 2016; (McIntosh, et al., 2014 as cited in McDaniel, et al., 2020, p. 2). Further, research has not been thoroughly expanded to include a chronological continuum whereby early experiences are incorporated into outcomes for adults. Likewise, studies outside of those implementing critical race theory do not account for racial/ethnic disparities within the research and do not implement exploratory analyses using critical race theory, critical feminism theory, or their analogous counterparts for gender identity or sexual orientation. As a result, the predominant body of research focuses on Caucasian Male participants in the majority and the findings do not provide a truly comprehensive research basis.

Future Research

While it is undeniably important to retain specialized research within total sample groups, future research should implement efforts to address participants within samples that are not the

Stereotypical White Male (SWM). Additionally, multidisciplinary cooperation between research specialists to redress the weaknesses in design should be implemented on a broader scale for productive results. Intersectional Studies is still considered to be an emerging field, but its significance cannot be overstated. If the basis behind the research for evaluation, application, and modification of systems to support equity, diversity, and optimal quality of life for all individuals then over-specialization and lack of communication will not correct the problem. However, before this can take place instrument development and evaluation that is applicable to narrower but overlapping context must be developed and controlled for reliability, followed by generalized instruments that can accurately measure the impact of the longitudinal disparities that are presented within the source literature and this study. Institutions have begun working within this area, but as an emerging field it is subjected to the specific interests of the professionals engaged in the work such as expanding studies to include another demographic (i.e. critical race theory) or gender (i.e. critical feminism theory) while not redressing other factors such as socio-economic status, exceptionalities, and the myriad qualities that make each individual unique and deserving of equity and positive assistance regardless of their backgrounds.

Limitations

The primary limitation behind the current project is instrument validity. The instrument was constructed using both researcher and professional subscales, and particularly in the case of the former there is no baseline established for reliability or validity, which significantly weakens the statistical results of the study. The secondary consideration within the scope of the study is whether further analytical skills would have improved the quality of instrument design and data analytics. Specific skills that need development are Multidimensional Item Response Theory, Differential Item Functioning, and Structural Equation Modeling.

Applications

The applications of the current study are based in establishing a continuous and expansive framework that functions as a bridge between the specialized research areas throughout academic and social/emotive learning. It functions as a structure to begin redressing the lack of inclusion in research and additionally the fundamental lack of a longitudinal research basis. In practicality, this can be expanded not only within the context of education but throughout all areas of intersectional research to promote less theoretical evaluation and more productive applied applications of research in redressing disparities. However, given the scope and quality of the current research project it serves essentially as a potential underpinning and extensive work remains to redress limitations in instrument and analysis to take future steps in this area.

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Appendix A

Table A: Total Sample Regression Model

Variable	PBS <i>r</i>	PBS Sig.	SOC <i>r</i>	SOC Sig.	COG <i>r</i>	COG Sig.		
RTI	.462	.000	.204	.007	.218	.004		
PBS			.332	.000	.245	.002		
SOC					.248	.001		
Adjusted R Square	df	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Constant	RTI	PBS	SOC	COG
.161	(4, 138)	7.829	.000 ^b	37.869	.090	.076	.354	-.001

Appendix B

Table B – African American Regression Model

Variable	PBS <i>r</i>	PBS Sig.	SOC <i>r</i>	SOC Sig.	COG <i>r</i>	COG Sig.		
RTI	.582	.000	.364	.026	-.111	.283		
PBS			.142	.000	.017	.002		
SOC					-.189	.001		
Adjusted R Square	df	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Constant	RTI	PBS	SOC	COG
.161	(4, 28)	.390	.814	97.350	.056	-.032	-.141	-.487

Appendix C

Informed Consent and Instrument

Participants are invited to participate in the following research study approved by IRB Docket #_____.

This study is for the purpose of determining whether academic and behavioral support programs in preK-12, cognitive hardiness, and social support can effectively predict student expectations and goals for their college experience. This survey is being hosted by QuestionPro via the SONA platform.

Risks: Students are asked questions about their academic experience. Some discomfort will come with the survey, but risks will be no greater than what they experience in each college day or average day.

Benefits: This study benefits the bodies of knowledge for both Education and Psychology by exploring how preK-12 practices affect post-secondary perceptions and goals. These practices currently exist as loose frameworks and additional research can promote a unified program designed for optimal student benefit.

Confidentiality: No personally identifiable information will be made available to the Researcher. The SONA platform records student data for purposes of extra credit or course requirements.

Compensation: No compensation is inherent in participating in this study. Individual instructors may provide extra credit, or count participation toward a course requirement at their discretion.

Contact Information: If there are any questions at any time about the study or the procedures, participants may contact the researcher, Raymond Yates (rayjyate@ut.utm.edu). If participants experience any discomfort, please contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Angie MacKewn (amackewn@utm.edu, 731-881-7370, 325 E Humanities).

Participation: Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Participants may withdraw from the survey, or decline to participate in whole or in part, without penalty or loss of benefits. Alternate assignments will be provided by instructors for students choosing not to take the survey where incentive is present. Use of cell phones is not advised due to potential technical issues.

The survey will take a maximum of twenty minutes to complete.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age and legally able to provide consent to take this survey.

Are you at least 18 years of age and consent to taking this survey?

1. Yes
2. No
- 3.

Demographics

Age (i.e. 21).

Please indicate the gender with which you identify.

Please indicate the race or ethnicity with which you identify.

Please indicate your class standing (i.e. Freshman).

Please indicate your major field of study.

Please indicate your registered hours for Fall 2020, (i.e. 15).

[illegible][illegible]

I feel awkward, insecure, or uncomfortable interacting with others socially.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I rarely find myself saying out loud or thinking that I am not good enough or capable of accomplishing something.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am committed to my job and work activities that I am currently pursuing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to view most setbacks as threats instead of challenges.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For variety's sake I often take different routes to work/school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others will act out of self-interest no matter what I say or do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I get the chance to be taught something, I know I can be successful at almost anything.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How strongly do you agree or disagree with each statement? Use the following scale to indicate your responses.

	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	N/A
I expect some things to go wrong but have no doubts about my ability to cope.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most of the things I am involved in are not very challenging or rewarding.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am likely to get upset if my plans are interrupted or do not turn out exactly how I wanted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is a direct relationship between how hard I work and the respect and success I will have.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not feel I have accomplished much lately toward my future goals and objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel inadequate compared to my peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I have little control over what happens to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	N/A

Please rate your expectations for your college experience below.

	Very Low	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Very High	N/A
Cultivating academic and scholastic knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultivating creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultivating critical thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultivating understanding and appreciation of diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultivating information literacy skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultivating vocational and occupational competence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultivating personal relevance and practical value to your courses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank You Page

Thank you for your interesting and/or participation in this survey. Your responses will help to expand the body of knowledge on the long-term outcomes of PreK-12 frameworks for academic and social learning. Your time is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact the researcher Raymond Yates (rayjyate@ut.utm.edu).

If you have any concerns or experience any distress regarding this survey, please contact the faculty advisor Dr. Angie MacKewn (amackewn@utm.edu, 731-881- 7370, 325E Humanities).